

**DRAFT**

# **Peer Review Plan**

**Elizabeth River  
Environmental Restoration Project (Phase II)**

**Paradise Creek**

**Portsmouth, Virginia**

**Feasibility Study**

**April 2007**

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## **Elizabeth River Basin, Virginia Environmental Restoration Project (Phase II)**

### **Peer Review Plan**

### **Paradise Creek Feasibility Report**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

This Peer Review Plan (PRP) describes the process for ensuring the accomplishment of a quality and timely feasibility report for the Paradise Creek Feasibility Study. Paradise Creek is a tributary of the Southern Branch of the Elizabeth River. The purpose of the feasibility study is to investigate the level and extent of sediment contamination in Paradise Creek and to recommend appropriate remedial actions. This feasibility study is a follow up to the interim feasibility study of the entire Elizabeth River Basin that was completed in 2001. This PRP will govern a formal review process for the technical and policy compliance of the results of the feasibility study with the goal of producing a high quality product that is completed on time and within budget. The focus of the PRP is to describe this review process with particular emphasis on the conduct of the review and the documentation of the technical review activities that are accomplished throughout the study process. The technical review ensures compliance with established policy, principles, and procedures and the presentation of assumptions, methodology, appropriateness of data used, reasonableness of results, and ability of the plan to meet the needs of the community, region, and Nation. The PRP indicates the methods necessary for this study to adequately address the peer review and external technical review needs including the identification of study team and technical review team members. This Draft PRP has been prepared in accordance with appropriate Corps guidance EC 1105-2-408, Peer Review of Decision Documents. The points of contact in the Norfolk District in regards to this plan are the Project Manager, Robert Pretlow, and the Chief, Environmental Analysis Section, Craig Seltzer. The point of contact for the National Planning Center of Expertise for Ecosystem Restoration is Dr. Dave Vigh, CEMVD-RB-T, (Telephone Number: 601-634-5854).

The NAD Community of Practice (COP) and the Center of Expertise (PCX) have not yet been contacted concerning the conduct of the upcoming external independent technical review (EITR) on the subject feasibility study. A delay in the receipt of the required level of non-Federal funding has greatly slowed the conduct of this effort and requires that the Project Management Plan, including the PRP, be revised to reflect a yet to be determined revised study schedule. The PCX is the manager of the EITR for all new feasibility studies, including external peer review for complex projects. Careful review of the special cases presented in paragraph 4.b. which require the conduct of an external peer review (EPR), clearly indicates that no such review is necessary or required for the subject study.

#### **EITR PROCESS**

## DRAFT

The EITR process for the Paradise Creek Feasibility Study will be managed by the PCX. The following is a description of that process as related to the conduct of the feasibility study.

a. External Independent Technical Review -- The EITR team is responsible for ensuring that all technical products of the study team meet Corps regulations, standards, and current guidance. The EITR team's review will focus on the underlying assumptions, conclusions, recommendations, models, and analyses in the context of established policy and guidance. The technical review for this study will be fully documented and documentation and certification of technical/legal review will accompany the report(s) that are submitted for policy review. Early identification of technical issues facilitates efficient resolution, minimizes policy review comments, and increases the likelihood of approval of worthy projects.

A leader for the EITR Team has not been selected at this time; however, the following activities will be the responsibility of that leader, when selected:

- (1) Lead and manage the EITR.
  - (2) Coordinate the assembly of an appropriate EITR team.
  - (3) Attend all milestones meetings, including IRC's and other vertical team meetings.
  - (4) Conduct external technical review meetings with the PDT, as necessary, to resolve identified issues early on.
  - (5) Maintain ongoing and continuous review of distinct products as they are completed such as problems, needs, and opportunities; assumptions, constraints, evaluation criteria, and forecasting methods; without project condition; possible solutions and initial screening of alternative plans; evaluation of detailed plans (benefit analysis, designs, cost estimates, environmental and cultural impacts, real estate requirements, etc; and plan selection (NED, NER, Locally Preferred Plan)).
  - (6) In addition, conduct reviews and provide written comments with coordinated responses of major products and draft and final report including environmental documentation. Dr. Checks and a memorandum for the record (MFR) will be the basis of accountability for the review of major products, including the draft and final feasibility report. A review team member will prepare the MFR and it will become part of the review team's records. Specific issues raised in the review will be documented in a comment, response, action required, and action taken format.
  - (7) Maintain a file on all external technical review documentation.
  - (9) Prepare a quality control report to document and certify the results of ITR.
- b. Use of Checklists -- Checklists may be used to guide the technical review and ensure that critical items are not overlooked. Checklists may be used to simplify the documentation of the review. Checklists may also be used to track outstanding action items for a particular study.

## **DRAFT**

The use of checklists shall not, however, eliminate the requirement to respond to specific comments.

c. Quality Control Report – The EITR team leader will prepare a quality control report (QCR) for the draft and final report to include how the quality control process was performed, summary of issues and detailed comments, how they were resolved, minutes of technical review meetings, and other documentation supporting technical review and formal certification of technical review and legal sufficiency. The QCR will accompany submission of the draft and final report to NAD and HQUSACE.

d. Conflict/Dispute Resolution -- The general process for resolving technical and policy issues identified during the ITR is summarized in the Standard Operating Procedures for the Planning and Policy Community of Practice, Appendix 4, Quality Management, dated 12 May 2005. Unresolved differences between the PDT and review team shall be documented. The EITR review team leader is responsible for identifying any contradictory recommendations, or outright disagreements, among members of the review team and/or the PDT. If these differences cannot be resolved, the functional chiefs in the originating district (NAO) will make the ultimate decision regarding the resolution of these ITR comments. These significant issues shall be documented in the quality control report accompanying the appropriate documents submitted. The originating districts will request the NAD Planning Community of Practice Leader to assist in the resolution of complex technical and policy issues.

e. Public Review – The public will be able to review the document during the public review period. The Office of Water Policy Review will determine if an expedited review is warranted or if the review will take place after higher authority review of the draft feasibility report. All comments received from the public will be given the same consideration as those received from the EITR team. The EITR team will likely be conducting their review at the same time the public review is on going. However, the EITR will be made aware of the review comments received from the public and have an additional opportunity to comment.

## **PROJECT DELIVERY TEAM**

The PDT for this effort was selected based on the expertise necessary to provide the technical input required to address the scope of work as detailed in the project management plan. The PDT consists of a project manager, study team leader, technical specialists, and management oversight members. PDT members may change from time to time due to workload, study priorities, turnover, etc. These members will be replaced as needed and as available. The following lists the PDT members including each member's discipline/role, and organization. The actual names of the team members are on file at the Norfolk District.

## DRAFT

### **PROJECT DELIVERY TEAM**

<u>Team Member</u>	<u>Discipline</u>	<u>Organization</u>
_____	Project Manager	CENAO-PM-J
_____ (1)	Technical Team Leader/ Plan Formulation	CENAO-PM-PE
_____	Regional Economist	CENAO-PM-PR
_____	Sociologist/Cultural Resources Specialist	CENAO-PL-PE
_____	Geo-environmental Engineer	CENAO-TS-EC
_____	Cost Engineer	CENAO-TS-ES
_____	Real Estate Specialist	CENAO-
_____	Environmental Scientist	CENAO-TS
_____	Contracting Specialists	
_____	Public Affairs Specialist	
_____	Budget Analyst	

#### **Management Oversight Team Members**

_____	Chief, Planning and Policy Br.	CENAO-PM-P
_____	Chief, Environmental Analysis Sec.	CENAO-PM-PE

(1) District currently in process of filling this vacant position.

### **EXTERNAL INDEPENDENT REVIEW TEAM**

As indicated earlier, an external independent technical review (EITR) team has not been established for the Paradise Creek Feasibility Study at this time. This team, when established, will represent all technical elements providing significant input to the study. The technical review team will have the credentials and experience necessary to provide a comprehensive review relating to specific study disciplines as the team members provide input in their principal areas of expertise. The external independent review team members will not be involved in the specific technical products under their review. The external independent review team can be augmented, as needed, with members from other external Corps offices, Centers of Expertise, labs, academia, or other sources of external peer review as determined necessary for a quality review. The following list of external ITR members will be completed when a team has been established:

## DRAFT

### **EXTERNAL INDEPENDENT REVIEW TEAM (EIRT)**

<u>Technical reviewer</u>	<u>Discipline of technical reviewer</u>	<u>Organization</u>
	EITR Project Manager, Plan Formulation	
	EITR, Hydrology & Hydraulics	
	EITR, Economics	
	EITR, Environmental	
	EITR, Cultural Resources	
	EITR, Civil and Structural	
	EITR, Geotechnical	
	EITR, Cost Engineering	
	EITR, Real Estate	

### **STUDY MILESTONE SCHEDULE**

The overall accomplishment of the appropriate independent technical review process for the Paradise Creek Feasibility Study will be the responsibility of the project manager in coordination with the study team leader and PDT. It will be important to ensure that technical review is ongoing and as issues are identified, meetings are scheduled to resolve those issues and proper documentation of the resolution of the issues is prepared, filed, and coordinated, as appropriate. Milestone meetings that include higher authority, local interests, and District personnel will be scheduled as required to discuss the scope of the study, study process and progress, study direction, and any pertinent issues that require such a meeting. All issue meetings are documented for the technical review files. The following table presents the major milestones that are scheduled or have already been conducted for the Paradise Creek Feasibility Study. In addition, technical review meetings, in-progress review meetings, project review board meetings, and issue resolution conferences will be held, as needed, and documented for the ITR files.

## DRAFT

### Study Milestone Schedule, Paradise Creek Project, Virginia

<u>Milestone</u>	<u>Description of Milestone</u>	<u>Date</u>
P5	Execute Feasibility Cost Sharing Agreement	Apr 2005
	Initiation of Feasibility Study	May 2005
P6	Initial Feasibility Coordination Meeting	TBD
	Division Receives Formulation Package	TBD
P7	Formulation Meeting/Briefing	TBD
P8	Division Receives Draft Feasibility Report/EA Feasibility Review Conference (FRC)	TBD
P9	Division & HQ Receive Final Feasibility Report/EA	TBD
P10	Completion of Feasibility Report/ Division Engineer's Public Notice	TBD

## SUMMARY

In summary, the NAD Community of Practice (COP) and the Center of Expertise (PCX) have not yet been contacted concerning the conduct of the upcoming external independent technical review (EITR) on the subject feasibility study. A delay in the receipt of the required level of non-Federal funding has greatly slowed the conduct of this effort and requires that the Project Management Plan, including the PRP, be revised to reflect a yet to be determined revised study schedule.

The conduct and documentation of the technical review for the Paradise Creek Feasibility Study will be an ongoing process that will provide assurance that a comprehensive and independent review has been conducted in accordance with the principles and guidelines established. The external independent technical review team leader, working through the project manager and technical team leader, will ensure that the above is accomplished. In addition, District Commanders, District functional chiefs, the DST, Planning COP, and RIT share the responsibility of ensuring a quality product.

April 2007

Project Manager  
Projects Branch  
Civil Section